

THE GRANNYTOWN GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Alden Historical Society, Alden NY 14004

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aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

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MISSION STATEMENT

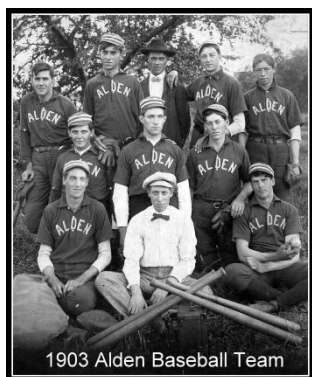
The Alden Historical Society, founded in 1965, is a volunteer-supported organization whose mission is to preserve, promote and present the history of the Town of Alden and its people.

Play Ball!

And play ball they did!

By the beginning of the 20th century, most large cities in the eastern United States had a professional baseball team, and most small towns and hamlets had a baseball team, including Alden.

An item in a 1934 Alden Advertiser mentions that W.J. Devine, then living in Porterville, had visited the Advertiser office. He had played baseball on a team forty years earlier (1894). His teammates were Wally (Wallace) Martin, Louis Upson and Frank Alger. They played on a diamond behind the sanitarium (Original Blackwater Bathhouse.) William J. Devine, a farmer, was born in 1869; Wally Martin, born in 1866, was a telegraph operator and later an insurance agent; Lou Upson, born 1863, was also a telegraph operator and died in a railroad accident in 1909 in Massachusetts. Frank Alger, an insurance agent, was born in 1849. He and his wife Emma built the red-tiled roof house on the corner of Broadway and Church Street in the village.



1903 Alden Baseball Team

The Historical Society's earliest photograph of an Alden town team is labeled "early 1900's."

A 1903 photo of a team lists Oliver Roberts, Elbert Hoffman, Michael Roll, Lucius Sherman, Frank Meyers, Frank Uebelhoer, Herbert Roberts and Leonard Krauss as players, Fred Lynch as umpire. The team was managed by Art Roberts and defeated every opponent for two years.

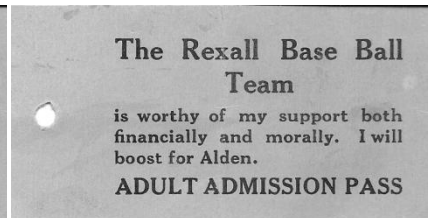
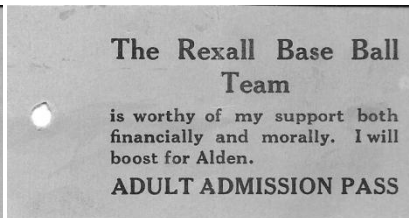
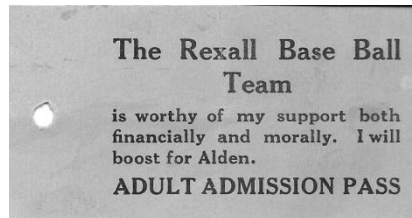


1924 Rexall Team

The Alden Rexall Team was formed by R.D. Stowell in the spring of 1922 for the express purpose of giving the Alden High School team some practice games. A team was also formed at the Bennett Manufacturing Company and the first two regular games played by the Rexalls were with Bennetts, the Rexalls winning both. That year the Rexalls played 17 games and won 14. The Rexalls represented Alden in the Buffalo Evening News League during the later years of the team's thirty-nine-year history.

CONTINUE ON PAGE 2

The 1924 Rexall team consisted of Taylor, Miller, Emery, Frantz, White, Steingrover, Lines, Bock, Nehrboss, R. Hodge, Kinne, Roberts, Stowell Durkee, E. Hodge, Snyder, W. Hodge, Cole. Only eight of the team members are in photo on the previous page.



TICKETS FOR THE REXALL BASEBALL GAME

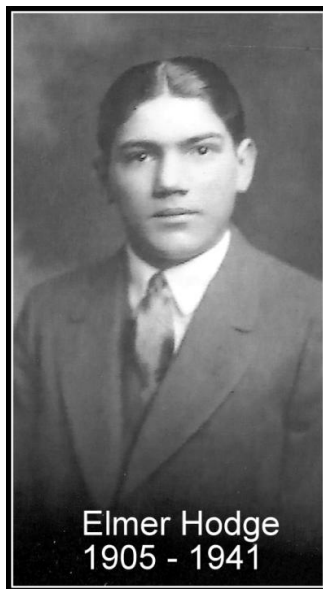
Baseball was one of the featured events of the Alden Grange Community Fairs (1920-1932). The 1923 Fair Booklet lists:

Thursday 2:30 pm - Alden Eagles vs. Marilla
Friday 2:30 pm - Rexalls vs. Wales Center
Saturday 2:30 pm - Lancaster vs. Buffalo
Colored Giants

The 1931 Fair Booklet states that "Plans now call

for games between the fastest semi-professional teams in Western New York as follows:

Thursday - Alden vs. Clarence Center
Friday - Alden vs. Java
Saturday - Alden vs. East Aurora



In 1934, a new sports column began in the *Alden Advertiser* written by Elmer Hodge (1905-1941), "Hodge's Sports Comments." He covered all sports both high school and town. In one of his first columns he mentioned that the 1933 Alden Town Baseball Team played 35 games, used up over 11 dozen baseballs—at a cost of \$130; spent \$75 for the rental of the playing field at Grange Park (Alden Town Memorial Park today); paid \$85 for umpires; \$90 for bats, etc.; and \$65 for transportation to away games.

It is also in "Hodge's Sports Comments" that we learn that Town Line, Alden Center and Millgrove all had their own teams in the 1930's. There was intense rivalry among the teams. Teams bought players from other teams. It is mentioned in 1934 that Donnelly and Nehrboss were purchased from Dan Pautler's Tigers (Alden Center) and Attica sold Heidenreich to the Alden Team. Walter Cole, an ace pitcher, was tempted away from Alden by Town Line.

Elmer Hodge wrote in June 1934: "Every team in our neighborhood seems to have one desire and that is to beat Alden. They know it's a mighty hard task and would be a great delight in trimming the local nine which is without a doubt one of the strongest teams gathered together in recent years."

Elmer's brother Richard took over writing a sports column after Elmer's untimely death in 1941. "Hodges Sports Shorts" ran for several years during World War II and immediately following. He covered sports as well as activities in and around Alden, including jabs at fellow columnist, R.D. Stowell. Dick was an avid baseball fan and player. He played on the Alden Town Team in the 1930's when the team won the Buffalo Evening News Suburban Baseball Pennant. He was a pitcher and also played first base. He could fill in as catcher or umpire when needed. Richard died at age 88 in 1988.



Front row: Alfred Broska, Lenny Weisbeck, Joe Weisbeck

SECOND ROW: Bustr Pheil, Chuck Lynch, Chester Groves, Harry Donnelly, Chiff Schiffner, Herb Broska, Fred Oestreich

THIRD ROW: Dick Hodge, Red Stockweather, Howard Nehrboos, Elmer Hodge, Carl Broska, Al Heidenreich, Leo Winegar, Hank Kaber



A resurgence of champion teams took place in the 1950's and 60's as evidenced by the championship trophies on display in the Historical

Society building. We are very grateful to Glenn (2nd Row, right end) and David Kocher for sharing the trophies and other artifacts of that era with us.

It was not just the players that enjoyed the baseball games through the years. The fans, too, enjoyed many a Saturday or Sunday afternoon watching their hometown team play on the diamond.

Again we turn to Elmer Hodge:

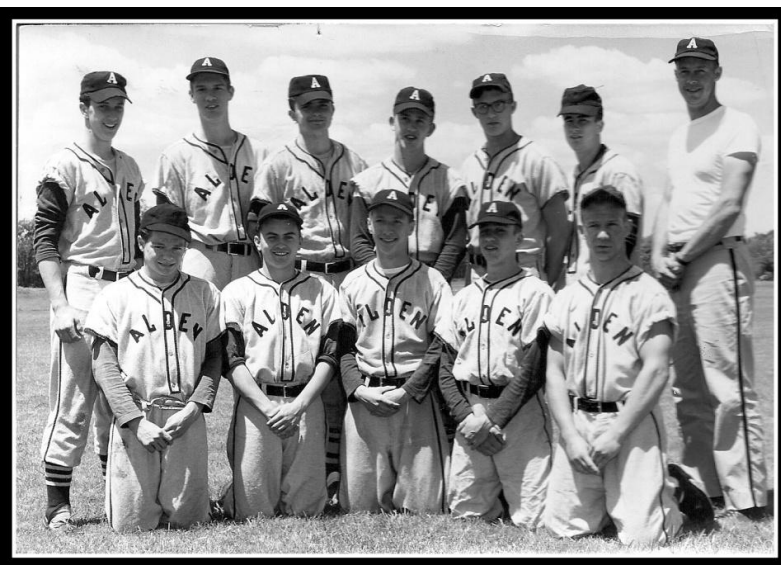
"Six hundred howling, shouting, cheering fans watched the undefeated Alden Team work up its sixth straight win at the expense of Town Line." (June 1934)

Play Ball !

Karen Muchow, Town and Village Historian

ANSWER

Front Row: Cliff Hardy, Dave Rynkowski, Stan Niemczycki, Fred Szpilka, Joe Sturm
2nd Row: Matt Wagner, Tom George, Larry Munn, Al Hassenbohler, Sam Isham, Dave Fox, Coach Walter Hay



1960 Photo by Paul Henry

A CHALLENGE FOR YOU!

Can you identify these ball players of so long ago?

HINTS:

Class of 1960

Varsity Baseball

Alden Central High School

Answers left of picture

Carl Matthies, Trustee



Pleased To Have Recently Acquired

The Alden Historical Society is pleased to recently acquire a beautiful curio cabinet during the online auction of the Dr. Ralph & Ruth Davis Estate, conducted by Moyer Auction & Estate Co. Measuring 5 ft. tall, 33 in. wide and 15 in. deep, the cabinet is made of oak with a bowed glass

front, three glass shelves, and a mirrored back. We look forward to putting the cabinet to use for additional display items in our main room, appropriately named the Ruth Davis Room. When one of our Trustees recently told Mrs. Davis that the Society had obtained the cabinet, she was glad to learn of it. We are happy to bring this cabinet "home."

Christopher Gust, President

With Deepest Sympathy



Florence Kegler

The Alden Historical Society extends heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends, and relatives of Florence (nee Helwig) Kegler, who passed away on November 19, 2015. Florence, a longtime member of the historical society, was the beloved wife of the late Glenn Kegler. She is survived by her children: Glen (Sue Gibson), Gary (Marcia), William (Pauline), Richard (Elizabeth), Ronald, and Donna (William) Kubik.



Norman W. Taylor

The Alden Historical Society extends heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends, and relatives of Norman W. Taylor, who passed away on March 27, 2016. Norm, a longtime member of the historical society, was the beloved husband of the late Natalie "Nancy" (nee Wilson) Taylor. He is survived by his daughters: Pamela (James) Saupe and Marcia (Nelson) Farber. Norm was the brother of June Beyers, Carol Sue Smith, and the late Gordon Taylor.

Message From the President

Happy Spring! Even though Western New York did not have the type of Winter our region is known for, the beginning of the Springtime months does seem to bring a "new beginning" to the calendar year. The grass becomes green, flowers bloom, leaves bud, and America's pastime, baseball season, begins. Our Alden community has a rich baseball history, which we cover in this issue's feature article, written by Karen Muchow. The Historical Society further celebrates Alden's love for baseball with the creation of two display cases in our building packed with memorabilia from Alden's baseball teams from yesteryear.



Special thanks to the Kocher family for lending us some of these items. You have a chance to see our new displays as Springtime also means the return of openings of our building for public tours and viewings. The building will be open the first and third Sunday for the next several months from 1 to 3 pm. Do plan on stopping by. One of our Trustees will be on hand to guide you through the building and answer any questions you may have.

We are also continuing work on our next historical marker project, noting the location of Alden's first settler, Moses Fenno. Additionally, we are planning some interesting programs at the Community Center in the coming months. We also look forward to hosting our local schoolchildren as we open the doors to the Henskee Road Schoolhouse and Society Building this Spring. And, yes, plans are already underway for our 2016 Erie County Fair display. We have a great year planned and we hope to bring awareness of our organization to the community. Thank you for your membership and interest as we strive to continue our mission to protect, present and promote the history of Alden and its people. Best regards.

Christopher Gust, President



ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING

Not a Member?

The Alden Historical Society is searching for interested persons to join them in learning about, and preserving, Alden's rich history. Membership is valuable for many reasons – here are just a few:

- ✓ Learning more about the community where you live.
- ✓ Finding more information about your ancestors.
- ✓ Exploring the history of your new residence.
- ✓ Reminiscing about growing up in Alden.
- ✓ Knowing Alden's business community and their support.

Memberships are also the perfect gift for parents, children and friends. Membership dues are inexpensive and offer a treasure trove of information and exhibits of the Town and Village's dynamic and interesting past.

The Alden Historical Society prints a quarterly newsletter, the *Grannytown Gazette*, featuring interesting articles and photos from the past, along with current activities of the Society.

Monthly programs are presented at the Alden Community Center, at the entrance to the Alden Town Park just off Main Street, the second Thursday of each month at 7 pm. All are welcome to attend these programs.

The Alden Historical Society building at 13213 Broadway is open from 1 – 3 pm the first and third Sundays of each month, with a docent available for tours and questions. Don't miss this opportunity to become involved with Alden's past and future. It's fun!

For more information about becoming a member, contact Membership Secretary Lynda Tucker at 716-937-7924 or email aldenhistsoc@gmail.com. Come and join our dedicated team of volunteers today and help promote the Alden Historical Society!

Lynda Tucker, Trustee

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

April 14, 2016.....Niagara Square: 200 Years of Movers and Shakers
Susan Eck



NIAGARA SQUARE, BUFFALO, NY
Photo by Buffalo News

In 1820, Niagara Square was a suburb of the village of Buffalo, a crossroads hidden among old-growth trees. Learn how it became a prestigious residential neighborhood and the center of the city's charitable organizations. Susan Eck, a native western New Yorker and former teacher, is a guest curator for the BUFFALO MUSEUM OF SCIENCE. In addition, Ms. Eck is a researcher and publisher for the *Western New York Heritage Press* web. Join us as we delve into Buffalo's movers and shakers and how they made history in Niagara Square.

May 12, 2016.....Alden: Home of the Famous Black Water Baths
Karen Muchow



ORIGINAL BLACK WATER BATHS
ALDEN, NY

For nearly sixty years Alden was widely known as the home for black water cures. At one time, 500 baths were given weekly in the three bathhouses in the village. Where were those bathhouses? How was the blackwater discovered? Did the baths help? These are just a few of the questions surrounding this important piece of Alden's history that will be answered during the May 12th program. Karen Muchow, life-long Alden resident and retired teacher, and granddaughter of the Original Bath's chief engineer, will tell the story of Alden's Black Water Baths with pictures and artifacts. Karen is presently the Archivist for the ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY and the TOWN AND VILLAGE OF ALDEN HISTORIAN.

June 9, 2016.....Civil War Mascots and Pets
Joyce Thompson-Hovey



PAINTING by JOHN WEISS

Any topic dealing with the Civil War is generally very popular. As a result, the subject matter can often be exhausted. But wait--just when you think you have heard everything there is to hear about the Civil War, former educator and Civil War scholar Joyce Thompson-Hovey will present a program entitled "Civil War Mascots and Pets." Ms. Hovey promises a lively and entertaining dimension to an already fascinating part of history.

Conrad and Carol Borucki, Program Committee

WELCOME MEMBERS

NEW MEMBERS

Angelo Daluisio
Charles Holcomb
Suzanne & Greg Scholand

June & Brian Dussault Family
Michelle Dussault
Amy Froebel
Barbara & Edmund Huestis
Richard Jablonski
Kristen & Ron Kavanagh Family
Sheila Metzger
Kerry & Vincent O'Hara Family
Erin & Scott Redmond Family

Edward Reich
Charleen Satkowski
Antoinette & Matthew Shriver
Lynda Tucker
Ann Walters

RENEWED MEMBERS

Doris Brade
Judith & Francis Downhower
Josephine Michaud

RENEWED BUSINESS MEMBERS

Neill & Strong, Attorneys

DUES ARE DUE



Once again we humbly acknowledge time's mastery of all we are, hope to be, and planned to do. Yes, March 31 is already in the past, and the yearly dues are due. We thank all who have renewed and newly joined, and greatly appreciate the support of all our members. We welcome anyone to join us.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:

New members are always welcome. Your support will ensure that the Alden Historical Society will continue to grow and prosper for years to come. Please make check payable as noted below.

Please note that the membership year runs from April 1 through March 31, with annual payment due by April 1.

Thank you for your support.

DUES

Single\$12.00	Name.....
Couple\$20.00	Address
Family.....\$25.00
Business.....\$50.00	Phone.....Email.....

A check payable to: ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY may be mailed to:

Membership Secretary
Alden Historical Society
13213 Broadway
Alden, NY 14004

DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

Please remember the Alden Historical Society in your estate plans.

A bequest in your memory or in memory of someone you love can help preserve the heritage of our community.

aldenhistsoc@gmail.com

Phone 937-3700

General Fund and Other Donors

Recently the Alden Historical Society has received generous donations from the following:

In lieu of Dues:
Jane & Clarke Burke Betty Eastwood
Elli DeFilippo Catherine Cyrulik

Anonymous
Helen Merle
Joan & William Gadd

Ed Reich
Catherine Cyrulik

Please be advised that donations to the Alden Historical Society are not tax deductible since it is not a 501(c)(3) organization.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING

The **Alden Historical Society's** many exhibits are located in the village at the **Alden Historical Society Building**, 13213 Broadway, across from Alden Sate Bank. The mission of the historical society is to preserve, promote and present the history of Alden and its people.

HOURS:

The **Alden Historical Society Building** is open to the public from 1 PM to 3 PM the first and third Sunday of each month except during January and February. Tours for individuals and groups may be arranged by calling 937-3700, 937-6400.

MEETINGS:

Program meetings are generally held at the Alden Community Center on the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm. Notices will be published in the **Alden Advertiser** in advance of the program. Open to the public, these programs are both informative and interesting. Many times a guest speaker is present. You are very welcome to come, share your memories and experiences about the evening's program, and enjoy an informal social complete with homemade refreshments. In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the lead of the Alden school system, postponing when after school programs are closed.

Trustee meetings are normally held at the **Alden Historical Building** at 7:00 pm. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month in February, April, June, August, October and December (even months). Trustee meetings are open to the membership.

2016 Officers

President – Christopher Gust
Vice President – Elouise DeFilippo
Secretary - Diane Casell
Treasurer- Clarke Burke

Ex- Officio Appointments

Curator – vacant
Archivist - Karen Muchow

Committee Chairs and members

Membership – Lynda Tucker, Clarke Burke, Jennifer Strong
Collections - Larry Kocher, Diane Casell

Publicity/Newsletter - Elouise DeFilippo, Carl Matthies, Clarke Burke, Christopher Gust, Sue Galbraith, Lynda Tucker

Program/Refreshments – Conrad & Carol Borucki / Sandy Dussault

Building and Grounds - Larry Kocher, Christopher Gust, Conrad Borucki

Fundraising– Gilbert & Sandra Dussault

Nominating - Elouise DeFilippo, Jane Burke

Audit – Lynda Tucker, Clarke Burke, Larry Kocher

Budget - Clarke Burke, Larry Kocher, Christopher Gust

Historical Marker/Signs - Gilbert Dussault, Larry Kocher, Conrad Borucki, Christopher Gust, Clarke Burke

Erie County Fair - Conrad Borucki,

Town Historian– Karen Muchow

2016 Trustees

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 Clarke Burke
 Diane Casell
 Elouise DeFilippo
 Gilbert Dussault
 Sue Galbraith
 Christopher Gust
 Larry Kocher
 Carl Matthies
 Jennifer Strong
 Lynda Tucker

ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY DATES TO REMEMBER WINTER 2016

PROGRAM MEETINGS Alden Community Center at 7 PM,	TRUSTEE MEETINGS Alden Historical Society Building at 7 PM
April 14.....Susan Eck Niagara Square	April 7..... <u>Members Invited</u>
May 12.....Karen Muchow Black Water Baths	
June 9.....Joyce Thompson-Hovey Civil War Mascots and Pets	June 2..... <u>Members Invited</u>

BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE ALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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New York State Education Department
716 937 3700

In the interest of conserving paper and postage, the Alden Historical Society offers paperless transmission of the newsletter. If members wish to receive the newsletter electronically, please notify any officer or trustee or leave a message at 716-937-3700.